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INPORT NEWS

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■ **WAINFLEET:** Communal servicing a sensitive issue in development of former Easter Seals Camp site

OMB to decide fate of controversial condo plans

InPort News Staff

WAINFLEET — Bad planning policies or sentimentality and fear of the future?

Ontario Municipal Board chair Joseph Sniezek will now have to sift through the body of evidence to determine if issues such as the Fowler's toad habitat, shoreline protection and flooding, lot size, and a controversial communal servicing system have been

resolved to the point where development of the former Lakewood Camp can go forward.

In closing submissions by appellants Lee Bott and Betty Kone on the third day of an OMB hearing, both argued that allowing communal servicing for 35 condo units on a 10-hectare lot flies in the face of the region's position that properties along the Lake Erie shoreline be serviced municipally.

Lakewood Beach Properties Inc. has stated the communal servicing agreement would be an interim solution that could become permanent if the region's future plan for municipal servicing does not materialize.

Municipal services would cost upwards of \$80 million and are currently under review.

Regional lawyer Michael Kyne said there are provisions in the Condominium Act that would ensure against the township having to bear any cost for the communal servicing system.

See OMB | Page 2

Supplied Graphic

Phase 1 (In colour) and Phase 2 (black and white) of a proposed condominium development in Wainfleet.



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Hearing adjourned pending decision

FROM PAGE 1

Lawyer Tom Richardson, who represented the township, agreed.

"If the modification to the official plan is allowed to proceed, there is a mechanism to protect rate payers from the costs, should the communal system fail," he said.

Richardson said the decision by the township and the region to support an official plan amendment (OPA) is based on "good planning." The land is zoned Lakeshore residential.

He asked the appeal by Konc and Bott be "dismissed."

Kyne said Konc's "foundation" for the appeal is that she would like to see the area remain the same.

"They prefer things remain the way they are," he said, recalling comments Konc made at the hearing. "They don't want to provide opportunities for outsiders."

He said OPA 18 was not a "rubber stamp" for the developer, but was drafted with "care in protecting the public interest."

The appellants led a development freeze should be in place as a result of ongoing water issues in the municipality. They said communal systems are not an option with residents who already face boil water orders from the region's department of health.

Bott also argued that Wainfleet is a welcoming community to outsiders. She said condominiums are an urban solution and do not suit the character of a rural community.

"People from the city come to the country and they want to bring the city here," Bott said. "If you want to stay in the city, stay in the city. That is what (Konc) meant."

Kyne said the region recognizes there is an issue in Wainfleet.

"It's an expensive and complex issue that will take some time to resolve."

Konc, who filed her appeal on behalf of the Wainfleet Rate Payers Association, said she is not against development along the lakeshore. She said development will, however, result in the need for more servicing in the form of things like professional fire-fighters, more schools and costs that all residents will have to bear.

Throughout the day, Bott and Konc argued against the notion that the site contained "one lot" and lot density for the proposal was 1.4 units per acre.

Despite studies, she offered anecdotal information observed over 27 years of living in the area.

She said there are "no guarantees" with respect to flooding when it involves Lake Erie.

Bott said the region and the township were overseeing the extinction of the Fowler's toad by approving the development.

The hearing has now adjourned pending a final decision by the board.

Hearings began Wednesday and drew about 30 residents who listened to legal and technical jargon presented by lawyers and experts on a number of issues that are impeding the construction of condominiums by Lakewood Beach Properties Inc. at the former Easter Seals Camp on Lakeshore Rd.

Lakewood Beach lawyer John Crossingham led the proceedings which addressed outstanding items from the last hearing. Those four items included the flooding which morphed into examining wave uprush and Casey's Drain, protection of the Fowler's Toad habitat, construction density and communal servicing.

"While it looks like a subdivision, it's not," Crossingham said.

Mark Brobbel, a biologist with Dillon Consulting performed an environmental impact study in consultation with the NPCA and the Ministry of Natural Resources.

He said the Fowler's Toad requires habitat protection in the dunes and said a trail system could be developed to deter residents from walking in the toad area and also noted that public education is pertinent. The toad is a threatened species and lives on sandy beaches and breeds in marshy shallows of lakes or permanent ponds.

"There will be certain areas where development will have to stay completely out of."

Brobbel said the NPCA's main concern was the shoreline protection and suggested ecological enhancement opportunities such as planting native plants and stabilizing the dunes. It was his professional opinion that "development can proceed with appropriate measures."

Brobbel said a clear construction plan would be put in place with temporary fences erected to keep construction equip-

ment out of protected areas. The timing of construction would also be considered to minimize its impact.

Brian Bishop, civil engineer with AMEC who specializes in water resource engineering was a senior peer reviewer on the Casey's Drain study. He developed a flood plan map with the drain and investigated potential impacts.

He said by widening a gap between the drain and the sand dune, the level of flooding could be reduced by six to seven centimetres.

"The site would be flood proof," he said.

Mike Varty, an environmental engineer with Genivar addressed the communal water system by examining daily sewage flows, soil property in addition to the development's future disposal, treatment and management of biosolids. Genivar explored a conventional gravity sewer and a small bore system with treatment tanks at the source.

"There are advantages and disadvantages for both systems," he said noting sewers provide the best solutions, but aren't an option at this time.

He said a membrane system is believed to be the best solution with solids being disposed of in two cells near the property entrances which is also near the Bott home. The system, he said, is reliable and provides optimal environmental safeguards.

He said 72-hour pump tests were completed and results show no detectable effects on the ground water or the aquifer.

Bott was visibly upset when Gary Hendry, an engineer with Genivar highlighted results from well testing program that made the Bott home well dropped 4.3 metres in 12 hours. He said the water yield from bedrock varies seasonally but said the system is "robust enough to handle the interference of development."

"I could see my check valve and our water was bad for a week after," she said, noting her alarm rang for three days because of the low water levels.

Hendry acknowledged the severe drop in water levels but said the point of the testing was to determine how much water consumption would affect surrounding wells.

During the second day of hearing project planner Tom Smart said since Phase 1 is being built on one property, they can build

35 homes on 25 acres and under the provincial legislature's condominium act, the condominiums don't have to abide by the minimum lot size. He said each property owner will purchase the exclusive use of a property for a condo.

"So you twisted the wording," Bott asked. "No, it comes out of the condominium exclusive use area," Smart replied.

He also noted that although a boil water advisory is in place, the property would not be subjected to the advisory because it has its own water treatment facility.

Smart said because Phase 1 is technically considered to be one lot, the piping used to supply water to homes and to eliminate solid waste could connect to the municipal line if it was implemented. The condominium corporation would also bear the financial costs to decommission the communal system.

Smart said the condo corporation has entered into a responsibility agreement with the region and the township if the corporation failed and wasn't able to maintain the property's treatment facilities.

In the meantime, he said the condominium corp. has a fund specifically designated to cover maintenance and long-term replacement.

Andrew Vitaterna a group manager of engineering services addressed water consumption and said they estimate 3.6 residents per unit would consume 250 litres of water per day. That totaled 31,500 litres per day with the treatment plant designed to filter 35,000 litres per day.

Township planner Chuck Miller reviewed a number of public information sessions, submissions from residents for and against the project and also outlined changes that were made to the township's Official Plan to permit the project.

"It's not uncommon for larger developments to have exceptions," he said of the amendments made to the township's policies. He also noted that a portion of Phase 1 was pre-designated as lakeshore residential area and in the places to grow act, development can take place in an existing designated area. "In our opinion the lakeshore construction conforms with us," Miller added.

"If we are doing a lot of special provisions to make this the perfect fit," Bott said.

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Investing in future Gators



Lakeshore Catholic High School hosted a hockey camp for male and female Grade 4 to 8 students last week. They invited 30 St. Elizabeth Catholic Elementary School students in addition to St. Patrick Elementary School students. Hockey coaches took students through drills, shooting and a scrimmage at the end of the day to give future gators an opportunity to hone in on their hockey skills.

—Kaesha Forand, Staff Photos



Upper left: Giovanni Dinardi makes a skate stop.
Upper right: Players pause before beginning the morning camp.
Above: A number of drills tested players' ability to transition quickly.
Lower left: Players pose for a photo.

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ourview

Weighing both sides

There are two sides to an argument.

One party is for an issue and the other is completely against it.

That's how we begin the story of the Lakewood Camp OMB hearing.

Two St. Catharines development proponents want to build a fancy condominium development at the former Easter Seals Camp, but many Wainfleet residents are against the project.

We're not here to take sides but to understand the feelings expressed by both parties.

Lee Bott and Betty Kone appealed to the Ontario Municipal Board because they believed the development breached seven key components, including minimum lot size, the protection of the Fowler's tow and the implementation of a water sewer system to service the area.

They raise valid points.

Any time that you destroy or alter a habitat, animals, insects and birds that call that area home are displaced. Although efforts are being made to ensure the Fowler's tow has its own protected area, that won't stop them from jumping on the road and being squished by vehicles.

These condominiums will be purchased by people who have become accustomed to living with dishwashers, bath tubs and those who may not be able to live the "It's yellow let it mellow" lifestyle that many Wainfleet residents use to conserve water. Odds are, these homeowners won't be concerned about water conservation that come with living in Wainfleet.

On the other hand, this development will surely be appealing. The homes will probably be perfectly manicured, common areas will provide residents with a place to socialize and certain areas will remain forested.

From the township's perspective, these homes will bring in a significant amount of tax dollars that can be invested throughout the township -- not bad for a township that has the smallest tax base and the second largest land mass in Niagara.

We understand that Wainfleet is rural, and it should keep its rural charm, but it's unreasonable to believe that development should stop.

Certain areas in Niagara are running out of space to build new homes and areas like Wainfleet and Port Colborne are obvious areas to grow.

Sure condominiums aren't a characteristic often associated with a rural community, but a walk along the lake reveals previous councils allowed plenty of development throughout the area.

There is a sensitive balance to keep in Wainfleet, let's hope if the project moves forward that balance can keep developers, new residents and current residents in harmony.

■ AND THE WINNER IS ...



The Port Colborne Hospital Foundation recently held the draw for a Christmas basket pulled won by Lindsay Rahaman. The basket was donated by Friends of the Foundation and helped raise \$760. Dr. Sohail Saff (left) and foundation treasurer Leslie Kennedy drew the winning ticket.

■ readers'views

Thanks for support

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all those who helped and supported both Jeff and I, along with Betty Kone and the Wainfleet Ratepayers Association, during the OMB hearing held Jan. 13 to 15 at the Wainfleet township hall.

The support we have had from our community was wonderful. All those who were able to attend all or part of the hearing being held during the week when so many are at work, your support was felt.

We were fighting to preserve one of the last pieces of public beach access in Wainfleet. We were fighting to preserve environmentally significant land that is the documented habitat of the Fowler's tow (a species at risk) as well as habitat of the red-headed woodpecker and the horned owl -- also on the endangered species list. Not to mention the other animals found on site that call Lakewood their home.

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■ UKRAINE

Two cheers for democracy



Gwynne Dyer

Yushchenko, Tymoshenko and Yanukovich were once called the eternal triangle of Ukrainian politics, and it was not a compliment. But eternity is not what it used to be: one side of the triangle is about to disappear.

Five years ago, when the Orange Revolution in Ukraine turned Viktor Yanukovich (now president) and Yulia Tymoshenko (now prime minister) into democratic heroes, the villain of the piece was Viktor Yanukovich, the former Communist apparatchik who tried to steal the 2004 election. But it hasn't been a happy five years in Ukraine since then, and it's even possible that Yanukovich will win the presidency fair and square this time.

It's certain that Yushchenko will lose it, and in the most humiliating manner imaginable: he persists in running for re-election, but he is unlikely to get more than 2 or 3% of the vote. He has been a very weak president except in one area: his obsessive feud with his former ally Yulia Tymoshenko, which has all but paralysed the government of Ukraine for five wasted years.

It's likely that she bears as much of the blame as he does for this disastrous clash of personalities, but she is a much more vivid personality and an old Ukrainian, so the public has turned against Yushchenko. He will all but vanish from the political scene after the election on Jan. 17, while "Yulia" (as she is known to everyone in Ukraine) will slug it out with her old enemy Viktor Yanukovich in the second round of voting on Feb. 7.

Last time round, this was a confrontation that seemed to matter. It was a great story: the young democratic heroine Tymoshenko in her trademark braid, committed to modernising Ukraine by bringing it into the European Union and the NATO military alliance, versus the corrupt and colourless Yanukovich, who wanted to drag Ukraine back into collectivist poverty and political subjugation to Russia. But things look different this time.

The greatest difference is that there no longer seems to be such a difference between their policies. It's now clear that Ukraine will never join NATO: its alliance does not seek a confrontation with Russia, and only 20% of Ukrainians would support membership in NATO anyway.

■ GWYNNE DYER

Not everyone wants democracy

FROM PAGE 4

It is equally obvious that the European Union has no intention of expanding this far east. It is already suffering severe indignation from its last round of expansion in Eastern Europe, and taking in an even poorer country with a population of 46 million people would not rank very high on the EU's list of priorities — even if it were not also reluctant to annoy the Russians. So Tymoshenko and Yanukovich no longer have much to disagree about in foreign policy.

Neither is there much to argue about an economic policy any more, since the country has few remaining options.

Five years of a vulnerable position within the recession struck.

The apparent prosperity depended on a huge inflow of foreign investment and the prosperity drained away as fast as the foreign capital itself. Ukraine's economy shrank by 15% last year, and the national currency, the hryvnia, has halved in value.

Whether Yanukovich or Tymoshenko wins hardly matters economically. Only massive loans from the International Monetary Fund are keeping the economy afloat at the moment, and for some time to come it will be the IMF, not the new government, that makes the key economic decisions.

So what's left? Well, they could fight over national identity.

The west of the country is Ukrainian-speaking and deeply nationalistic; the east is mostly Russian-speaking, heavily industrialized, and would welcome closer ties with Russia.

So this is the ground on which the two leading presidential candidates have chosen to fight, with Tymoshenko promising to keep Ukrainian as the sole official language and Yanukovich promising equal status for the Russian language.

Given the demography of Ukraine, this probably means that Tymoshenko wins the presidency in the second round of voting.

Indeed, a recent poll disclosed that only 30% of Ukrainians think that the change to democracy has been good for their country, whereas 50% of Russians think so.

(The nationalist vote is split too many ways in the first round, with a total of 18 candidates running.)

But who cares, apart from Ukrainians? The glory days of the Orange Revolution were misleading. The key fact about the country is that Ukrainian per capita income is only about a third of Russia's.

When the Soviet Union collapsed in 1991 Ukraine kept its steel and chemical industries, and even an aviation industry, but the oil and gas stayed in Russia.

Ukraine has to pay through the nose for it, and it simply must stay on good terms with Russia.

With so little room for manoeuvre abroad, and such rampant corruption at home (it is said that 400 of the 450 members of parliament are millionaires), Ukrainians have grown very cynical about democracy.

Indeed, a recent poll disclosed that only 30% of Ukrainians think that the change to democracy has been good for their country, whereas 50% of Russians think so.

And only 26% of Ukrainians say that they are satisfied with their lives.

Democracy does not cure all wounds.

Gwynne Dyer is a London-based independent journalist whose articles are published in 45 countries.

localbrief

LOCAL WOMAN FACES CHARGES

PORT COLBORNE — A 28-year-old Port Colborne woman faces numerous charges after being seriously injured in a crash four months ago.

Niagara Regional Police say the woman was heading south on Elm St. in a van on Sept. 22 at 5:02 a.m. The van was travelling at a high rate of speed, jumped railway tracks that cross Elm St., and the driver lost control when it landed on a sidebed sideways through the Clarence St. intersection and sheared a traffic pole from the side, exposing live wires as the pole fell on its back.

Police arrested Julie Ryan. She was charged with dangerous driving, impaired driving, driving with a blood/alcohol concentration above 80, owning and operating a motor vehicle without insurance, using plates not authorized for the vehicle, and owning and operating an unsafe vehicle. She is scheduled to appear in court in March.

— Inport News Staff

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Ask the
HEALTH EXPERT
BRENDAN BRAZIER

Continual Cleansing for Optimal Health & Vitality

There are many excellent articles and books dedicated to cleansing so I won't put too much into the details in this article. What is interesting to note, however, is that all of them promote complete abstinence from animal-based foods like fatty acids or plant-based nutrition during the cleansing process. My take on this is that if you fast to good effect after a cleanse, then why not adopt a "continual cleansing" type diet? That's what I call the Thrive Diet, a common sense, simple approach to eating that can keep you plant-based, whole, and healthy.

You're excited to beat the plunge and do a cleanse. That's a great first step. Once you have completed the cleanse of your choices, you will likely feel much better and you won't want your great feeling to go away. So how do you extend and expand upon these cleansing benefits for long-term optimal health and vitality? Start by consuming lots of raw, alkaline, fibrous fruits and vegetables. Eat on a regular basis, these foods will aid the natural retention process from processed foods that cause the body to become acidic.

At first, however, the body will not naturally cause plant-based foods when it is accustomed to processed and refined foods. You have to simply begin by adding more raw, natural, plant-based foods to your diet but without restricting anything. Over time, you will naturally and peacefully have less interest in eating the more processed foods and you will gravitate towards the most processed whole foods. I know this sounds very simplistic but it is a scientific fact that when the body has all of its nutritional needs fulfilled, cravings will naturally decline.

To get to the point where you no longer have to be constantly eating unhealthy food is a great feeling and a lifehack says that your body is cleansing itself and making a smooth transition to a much healthier lifestyle. Constantly fighting cravings is not a mentally healthy way to live so

changing the perception of what your body desires is fundamental to breaking cravings permanently.

A good way to get more meat and vegetables into your diet is by making smoothies at home and drinking them as snacks or meals. Beginning your day with a smoothie made with Vega Whole Food Health Optimizer is one of the best ways to get the body going, providing clean, healthy, easily absorbed food to jump start your day.

Smoothies are easy and convenient to prepare and can pack a lot of nutrition into a glass — plus their great taste appeals to almost all palates. It is important to note that though there are countless yummy smoothie recipes out there, some are more healthy than others. Incorporate many smoothies contain mostly carbohydrates. I like my smoothies to incorporate all the elements of a complete meal including protein and ESAs, by following my basic guidelines for an ideal smoothie:

- Ensure only plant-based ingredients are used to benefit from continual cleansing
- Use ripe whole fruit and fruit juices for flavour and essential vitamins rather than adding sugar or artificial sweeteners
- Incorporate multiple sources of protein for a balanced amino acid profile
- Add source of Omega 3 & 6 ESAs for their countless health benefits
- Try adding some "green boost" to pack in extra servings of vegetables

In my book, The Thrive Diet, I include several recipes for detoxifying-rich, vitamin smoothies. I created Vega Whole Food Health Optimizer as an easy, on-the-go alternative providing complete protein, ESAs and fibre. Shake with water or blend with a banana, juice and some berries and you have all the makings of a great liquid meal that facilitates continual cleansing!

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■ **VALE INCO:** Striking workers rally to mark six-month anniversary

'No one wins in a strike'

ALLAN BENNER
InPort News Staff

PORT COLBORNE — Monday Jan. 11 passed quietly at Vale Inco's Port Colborne plant — for those on the picket lines as well as those still working inside.

Striking workers at the company's plant in Sudbury held a rally to mark the date, said Steven Ball, corporate affairs manager for Vale Inco's Ontario operations.

But for the company itself, Jan. 11 was not a date it wanted to recognize. It marked the sixth-month anniversary of the start of strike by workers represented by United Steelworkers Local 6200.

"Six months is not a date certainly that anyone is proud of," Ball said.

"No one wins in a strike. It has an impact on those who are on strike, as well as on

those who are working."

It has a financial and emotional impact on the striking workers — 3,000 of them at both the Port Colborne and Sudbury facilities. But it also takes an emotional toll on the company staff who continue to work there.

"It weighs everybody down."

Despite the impasse the negotiators from the union and company have reached, Ball is confident the strike will eventually be resolved.

It's not a matter of if — it's a question on when.

"It will be resolved. There's no question. It will be resolved at the bargaining table."

But before that can happen, he said the union needs to recognize the global challenges the company is facing. And it needs to allow changes to be made to employee

contracts, to allow the company to overcome those challenges.

"Some fundamental changes are needed in the collective agreements in Sudbury and Port Colborne as part of an ongoing change process occurring in our company, in order to meet the demands of the business that we're in — tomorrow and in the future," he said.

"Fundamentally the world economy has changed, and our operations in Ontario have some fairly significant challenges — particularly around needing massive capital investment — to keep them operational and sustainable well into the future."

He said costs need to be brought down to ensure the company has enough funds to reinvest in its facilities.

For instance, he said to meet changing environmental requirements at its Sudbury plant, Vale Inco needs to spend \$1.3 billion to \$1.5 billion over the next five years. And that's not including the ongoing costs of mining and producing the metal.

"We've done some fantastic work over the past two decades of getting our emissions down, but the limits (on allowable emissions) keep coming down."

Meanwhile, he said the market for the nickel the company produces is another

challenge Vale Inco faces.

And supply continues to outweigh demand for nickel on global markets.

"We are in a very competitive world," he said.

During confidential negotiations last spring, Ball said the situation the company faces was explained to the union's negotiating team.

The negotiators discussed the need for changes to collective agreements to make the company sustainable for the long term.

"And sadly for whatever reason, it appears they (the union) chose not to believe that," Ball added.

The company is eager to get back to the table with the union.

He said Vale Inco has asked the union several times to set up a meeting between the lead negotiators, to establish a framework for a new contract.

"They haven't accepted that offer ... that's why we're at an impasse."

He said calling in a mediator to help the two sides reach an agreement hasn't been discounted.

But before that can happen, he said both sides need to return to the table.

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localbrief

SEARCHING FOR TOP VOLUNTEERS AND BUSINESSES

PORT COLBORNE — The Port Colborne-Wainfleet Chamber of Commerce is searching for exceptional Port Colborne and Wainfleet residents and businesses.

The annual President's Awards Reception will be

held Wednesday, March 3 but this year's event will be different than previous events. Edith Wagner, chamber officer manager said instead of the usual gala dinner, a special reception will be held during the week.

"It will be better, it seems everybody is going that way."

They hope to sell 125 tickets for the 7 p.m. cocktail hour followed by the awards of excellence ceremony at 8 p.m. where a youth citizen of the year, citizen of the year and business of the year will be honoured.

Wagner said anybody who knows a deserving person or business from Port Colborne or Wainfleet should visit the chamber's website at www.pcwchamber.com, on the right side of the main page to print the application form. Nominations must be submitted by Friday Jan. 29 at 4:30 p.m. at the office on Main St.

The nomination form includes three simple questions outlining why the person or business has made a difference in their community and how he or she has exemplified voluntary contributions.

"We need the support of the community and to recognize volunteers for what they've done to go above and beyond."

The citizen of the year award has been given out since 1981. Most recent honourees include Brent Kovach, Jane Feagan and Florence McIntyre. The chamber has been honouring businesses of the year since 1988. Previous winners include Oskam Steel Fabricators Ltd., Dundee Wealth Management, and Mann's Food Mart and Bakery.

The city's future leaders have been honoured since 1995. Previous youth citizens of the year include Charlene Hartwick, Matthew Fagg and Brandon de Babcock.

For more information or to request nomination forms through e-mail or fax, contact the chamber at 905-834-9765. Forms can also be picked up at the office.

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■ **ONTARIO EARLY YEARS CENTRE:** Celebrating Family Literacy Day Jan. 27

Sing for the love of literacy



KAESHA FORAND Staff Photo

Ontario Early Years Centre program facilitator Kelly Wilcox gives a sneak preview of *Five Little Monkeys Sitting in a Tree* to Rhys Kimber and his mother Lauren. The book will be the main focus of the upcoming Family Literacy Day to be held Jan. 27 from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. at the Early Years Centre at Port Cares, 92 Charlotte St.

KAESHA FORAND
InPort News Staff

PORT COLBORNE — The Ontario Early Years Centre believes it is important for children to be engaged in literacy through a number of outlets including reading, singing and playing games.

Through the Family Literacy Day, OEYC staff will highlight the importance of literacy through song. Parents who participate with their children will receive information and supplies to help make learning fun.

OEYC site supervisor Lori Brady said they are encouraging parents or caregivers to build their child's literacy skills during Family Literacy Day Wednesday Jan. 27 from 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. at the centre in Port Cares.

The event aims to help participants brush up on their literacy skills in fun and different ways. Its featured book will be *Five Little Monkeys Sit-*

Event details, Family Literacy Day

When: Jan. 27, 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

What: Brush up on literacy through song, for parents and children

Where: Port Cares, at the Ontario Early Years Centre, 92 Charlotte St., Port Colborne

Contact: Call 905-834-9071 for required registration

ting in a Tree by Eileen Christelow.

By singing along to the story, children learn patterns of words, rhymes and rhythms which is strongly connected to language skills.

Activities will also take place. Pre-registration for the day is required. Call 905-834-9071 to register.

Staff hope that Family Literacy Day will draw about 40 parents and children.

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■ **MUSICAL:** Red, Hot and Cole premieres next month

A musical tribute to Cole Porter

JORDAN NUNZIATO

For InPort News

PORT COLBORNE — From Indiana to New York, London, Paris and Venice, Cole Porter has seen it all.

The musical legend travelled to stages and penthouses all over the world, and soon he will be right in our own backyards. Curtains will be drawn, stage lights will shine and Porter's music will ring through the air as the Port Colborne Operatic Society presents *Red, Hot and Cole* next month.

This production of song and dance will hit the Lakeshore Catholic High School auditorium Feb. 19. It will run weekends until March 7.

See **MUSICAL** | Page 9

JORDAN NUNZIATO InPort News Photo

Stephanie Menicanin and Tim Barnal rehearse their roles as Linda and Cole Porter respectively, for the Port Colborne Operatic Society's production of *Red Hot and Cole*, premiering Feb. 19.



• At least 1 in 3 people could still get H1N1.

• Half of those in hospital with H1N1 have been under 24 years old.

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• More people have been sick this year from the flu compared to the past 5 flu seasons.



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■ MUSICAL

Operatic society warms up for Red, Hot and Cole

FROM PAGE 8

"Cole Porter's music is extremely difficult, but it can also be quite funny and moving as well," says stage director Heather Alvin.

Porter—who lived from 1891 to 1964—is widely known for his shows on Broadway—such as *Kiss Me Kate*, *Anything Goes* and *Fifty Million Frenchmen*—as well as songs like *Night and Day*, *I Get a Kick Out of You*, *Well, Did You Evah!*, and *I've Got You Under My Skin*.

Besides writing music for Hollywood movies—including *Broadway Musical* of 1940, *The Pirate*, and *High Society*—his life

was chronicled in films such as the 1946 movie *Night and Day* and the 2004 film *De-Lovely*.

The PCOS production of *Red, Hot and Cole*, according to Alvin, is a remembrance of Porter's life.

"He was a very involved man, very debonair and travelled the world. He was very involved in writing his music and had a different take on things," she says.

"He was around for the golden age of jazz and blues and wrote a lot of Broadway shows that many are familiar with."

"This production pays homage to the way Porter captivated audiences around the globe, as many of his classic numbers—as well as not so well-known ones—will be performed."

"This production will showcase a large variety of music," says music and choral director Faye Bean.

"We will be performing 50 plus songs, but in bits and pieces."

She adds that the older crowd may know

Cole Porter's music is extremely difficult, but it can also be quite funny and moving as well.

Heather Alvin, stage director

the his more than the youth, but the entire audience will be exposed to the old-fashioned musical, experiencing it in an entertaining and lively showcase.

"It's that era and the music of that era that we are showcasing," says Bean.

Bean says that some of the songs will begin to play, the crowd will get a taste of the classic hit, and then dialogue will interrupt.

"The finale will be the best for recognizable music," says Bean.

All of the music will be performed live.

"We have a pianist, bassist and drummer, and all of the cast will sing—it's a completely live experience."

The show stars Tim Barnai as Cole Porter and Stephanie Menicann as his wife Linda

Porter. It also features Allison Fox as Ethel Merman, Laurie Labelle as Elsa Maxwell, Dahlia Brannigan as Bricktop and Emily Denney as Bella Spewak.

Evening performances are scheduled to begin at 8 p.m. and matinees at 2 p.m.

Reserved seating is \$17 and may be ordered by calling 905-834-9318.

Show details

What: Red, Hot and Cole

Presented by: Port Colborne Operatic Society

Shows: Feb. 19, 20, 21, 24, 27 and 28; March 5, 6 and 7

Where: Lakeshore Catholic High School auditorium, 150 Janet St., Port Colborne

It's a completely live experience.

Faye Bean, musical director



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■ I'VE BEEN THINKING

Life mimics Christmas Eve experience

JEVIA SAM

Morgan's Point and Forks Road East United Churches

Christmas Eve 2009 was memorable for two distinctly different reasons. It was the first time in three years

that our entire family was together on Dec. 24, with the arrival of our daughter, Priya, who had been teaching English in Korea for the past two-and-a-half years.

We all climbed into the family car and headed down the highway to the Christmas Eve service at Morgan's Point United

Church.

It was a great service, as always, with our choir telling the Christmas story in song interspersed with readings of the nativity, the congregation singing familiar Christmas carols with great gusto, and the preacher delivering a heartwarming — yet body-squirmying — message, sprinkled with appropriate anecdotes and liberal doses of humour (even if I say so myself).

As always, the service ended with the singing of *Silent Night* and a candle lighting. It was everything you'd expect a Christmas Eve service to be ... and then some. Reason No. 2: It all started about 45 minutes prior to the service, when Priya — who was still dealing with jet lag — asked if we could get her a cup of Tim Hortons coffee. Papa obliged and headed into Port, only to be greeted by a silent light at the location in the mall.

"Tear not," I assured my daughter.

"There is another one right around the bend."

We sped to the one on Main St., no coffee. We did not risk a trip to the one at the corner of Hwy. 140 and Hwy. 3 as it was

getting closer to the service time by now. Thankfully, the aforementioned sermon had enough java in it to keep our drowsy daughter wide awake without the aid of a medium double double, praise God.

Following the service, we headed off to London to spend Christmas Day with my parents and siblings. I was quite tired, but quite confident that the caffeine content of a large coffee would be all I'd need to get me there from here in two hours or less.

Imagine our absolute horror when we discovered that not even the coffee shops off the freeway exits were open.

Thankfully, we made it safely to our destination without an assist from the fabled defenceman.

Does not life mirror what we experienced on Christmas Eve?

There is a part of life which is totally predictable — like the service — and another part which catches us off guard — like the unpredictable early closure (at least, unexpected on our part) of Tim Hortons.

See I'VE BEEN THINKING | Page 14

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Year in review



Staff Photos

Amanda Morely (pictured above) was encouraging residents who find large amounts of bees to contact her instead of killing them since bees are vital to pollinating Niagara's precious resources: our agriculture. In the background is beekeeper George Scott tending to a colony of caucasian honey bees in May



Linda Stoit vice chair and Gino Spada chair of the Port Colborne Gateway Association stand behind the new Lock 8 Gateway park sign May. The park is a big part of changes the city will see throughout the next two decades. This year, Phase 1 will be implemented and will see changes made from curb to store front to provide a friendly and comfortable streetscape environment. Spada also displays the 166-page community improvement plan.



Bridges Community Health Centre opened its doors to Port Colborne and Wainfleet residents in October. Pictured from left is certified diabetes educator Marcie Turpel, IT and data manager Luigi Moreno, centre executive director Taralea McLean, physician Jason St-Hilaire and diabetes educator Meagan Sullivan.

DENTURES: Things Every Denture Wearer Should Know: DID YOU KNOW?

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- ▶ Dentures can change shape if they dry out. When not in use, cover dentures with (room temperature) water or a denture-cleaning solution to prevent them from drying out.
- ▶ Dentures should be brushed inside and outside daily with a soft, large nylon denture toothbrush with round-ended bristles. Use denture creams instead of toothpaste, which is too abrasive and will scratch your denture. Rinse with cold water.
- ▶ Your mouth is constantly changing. Inspect your denture regularly for worn teeth and cracks.
- ▶ Be sure to visit your dentist regularly as part of your recommended check up schedule.
- ▶ Some medications can affect denture fit and wearability so be sure to discuss this with your doctor and dental professional.
- ▶ Only your dental professional is qualified to diagnose your oral health and adjust your denture or partial.
- ▶ Worn and stained dentures can make you look older and cause your dentures to function poorly.

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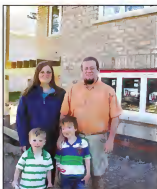
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The Shea family including Joshua, 3, Caleb, 5, Charissa and Bradley stand in front of their Habitat for Humanity house. The family was announced as the new owners of the house on Paul St. in Port Colborne in May.

Looking back at 2009

FROM PAGE 12



Staff Photos

Pictured above: Firefighters stood on what's left of Port Colborne's historic Reeb House, which went up in flames in December.



Striking Inco workers have been on the picket line since July 12 and with no bargaining in sight, they're not looking forward to a long, cold winter of huddling around the fire. Strikers include from front left Andy Bledsoe and Dave Beck, and in the back row are Rob Sardella, Rich Agius, Moreno Francescangeli, Mike Courchesne and Ralph Williams on site in October.



The City of Port Colborne was designated a Safe Community in April. From left, in back, Mayor Vance Badawey, Safe Communities Canada president and founder Paul Kello, Safe Communities Canada board chair John Dalzell, student Katelyn Fontaine and in front, student Skyler Bohun, left, and Chelsea McIntyre. The Key to Safety was presented to the city.



Lakeshore Catholic school held its pilgrimage, the Gator Walk in support of Third World projects for people in need.

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■ CITY COUNCIL

Future of economic development now in city's hands

MARK TAYTI
InPort News Staff

PORT COLBORNE — A 5-4 vote in city council chambers Monday, Jan. 11 put an end to Port Colborne Economic and Tourism Development Corp.

The tiebreaker vote by Mayor Vance Badaway has now put the future of economic development in Port Colborne under the complete control of the city.

Since its inception in 2004, the corporation has gone from being run as a partnership between civic and local business leaders to having city councillors serve as sole membership on its board of directors.

Ward 4 Coun. Kate Leigh voted against the recommendation that gives the city overarching control of economic development duties.

She felt captains of local industry were best suited to the task of running the development corporation and was sorry they were not given more of a chance to succeed.

"Winding it down and dissolving it into a city department" is the wrong way to go, Leigh added.

Ward 4 Coun. Barry Butters disagreed. Butters characterized the corporation as "an experiment that didn't work out."

"The budget we put forward for the corporation is in excess of \$500,000," Butters said. "That's a lot of hay to put out there ... it's time to bring it back in-house."

Ward 1 Coun. Bill Steele said he was torn over which way to vote.

Ward 1 Coun. David Barrick was another councillor who said there were pros and cons to consider.

"We are either all in or all out," Barrick said. "We cannot continue in half measures."

Barrick supported the bid to bring the corporation fully under the city's control.

Ward 2 Coun. Frank DiBartolomeo said the problem was micromanagement.

"The present system is not working and the proposed system will not work," he added.

He said the city's economic development officer should be given a clear mandate and allowed to run with it.

Badaway said the issue boiled down to "trans-

"This is all about being transparent. This is about being accountable. We are the stewards of public dollars — not a public board, not an appointed body of people. We are elected to make decisions in council. In my view, I don't think we should be creating other boards and commissions."

Mayor Vance Badaway

parency" and "accountability."

He said the city is perceived as having "a wide open door" when it comes to development.

"(City hall) is the point of contact," Badaway said in explaining the need to take back the reins of the economic development corporation.

The mayor compared it to Local Health Integration Networks and said operating a board or corporation "compromises the fundamentals of government."

"This is all about being transparent. This is about being accountable. We are the stewards of public dollars — not a public board, not an appointed body of people. We are elected to make decisions in council. In my view, I don't think we should be creating other boards and commissions."

He said senior management at city hall and council members work well as a team.

"We are very aggressive and very business-minded," Badaway added.

Ward 3 Coun. Gary Bruno felt the city was limiting its options by doing away with the corporation.

City manager Bob Hell and economic development officer Stephen Thompson will now work out the details of how the development corporation will be folded into city operations.

mtayti@wellandtribune.ca

■ SCHOOL LIFE

Feeder schools get treated to a basketball game

PAIGE THOMPSON
For InPort News

As it gets closer to the end of the school year, many high schools are thinking of Grade 12 students leaving and a new group of students entering.

Grade 8 students are beginning to decide which high school they want to attend so local high schools are putting on activities and events to attract potential students.

Port Colborne High School held a senior boys basketball game against Confederation to entertain feeder school students and Sarah Boulton kicked off the game with the national anthem.

The Blue Bears started off quite well and by the end of the first quarter were winning 15-9. During the game, Port High's music ensemble performed and by the end of the second quarter the blue bears were still in the lead 29-16.

■ I'VE BEEN THINKING

Is your faith strong enough?

FROM PAGE 10

As I write these words, the country of Haiti is reeling from the devastation of an earthquake that has resulted in unimaginable loss of life and destruction of property.

The unpredictable still happens. It made me think about our faith — is it adequate to see us through unpredictable times? Would we still be able to trust in a God whose ways are not always clear or comprehensible to the human mind?

Perhaps you could ponder these words penned by songwriter Matt Redman:

Blessed be your name in the land

that is plentiful.

Where your streams of abundance flow, blessed be your name.

Blessed be your name when I'm found in the desert place.

Though I walk through the wilderness, blessed be your name.

Blessed be your name when the sun's shining down on me.

When the world's 'all as it should be', blessed be your name.

May these words be yours and mine as we go through predictable and unpredictable moments in 2010.



Maria Zmyrnyy
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■ **CONCERT:** The British Invasion plays Lakeshore Feb. 5 to support music program

Fundraising concert could be music to students' ears



KAESHA FORAND Staff Photo

The Lakeshore Catholic High School jazz band will be the opening act for the British Invasion Band during a fundraiser for the school's music program on Friday, Feb. 5 at 7 p.m. Tickets for the event are available in advance at the school, at the door, or through jazz band musicians which include Dan Stabula, Erika Frey, Jenna Barnes and music teacher Loren Michalak.

KAESHA FORAND
InPort News Staff

PORT COLBORNE — The Lakeshore Catholic jazz band belts out a good tune — but with old instruments, there's room for improvement.

The band hopes a fundraising concert with the British Invasion Band will not only celebrate the '60s, but also provide much needed funds to purchase expensive instruments.

The music department needs saxophones, trumpets and trombones — and at \$1,800 a piece, music teacher Loren Michalak is hoping the fundraiser is a success.

"Some of the equipment is original from the school opening. It's very old and faulty," she said.

"It gets to a point where the refurbishment necessary would be too costly."

The school opened in 1988. Michalak said the concert is the first fundraiser for the

Some of the equipment is original from the school opening. It's very old and faulty.

Loren Michalak, Lakeshore Catholic teacher

music department. She is hoping to sell out the 600-seat auditorium.

The 15-member Lakeshore jazz band will play a variety of music, including by Van Morrison, Stevie Wonder and Michael Buble.

The British Invasion Band will perform popular songs from The Beatles, The Rolling Stones, The Troggs, The Kinks, The Guess Who and The Yardbirds.

"The jazz band is good — they've been rehearsing since September — and the British Invasion Band is awesome, they're very polished, very entertaining."

Tickets for the Feb. 5 event can be purchased at the school in advance, at the door, or by calling Nancy Bodis at 905-

835-2451.

Concertgoers will be entered in a draw to win an acoustic guitar and an electric guitar kit with an amplifier and a case.

kforand@wellandtribune.ca

Concert details

When: Friday, Feb. 5, 7 p.m.

Where: Lakeshore Catholic High School

Bands: The British Invasion Band; show openers, The Lakeshore Catholic Jazz Band

Cause: Fundraiser for the school's music department

Tickets: \$10, available at the door or in advance; call 905-835-2451

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■ along the lakeshore

Jan. 27

• Family Literacy Day – join the Port Colborne Ontario Early Years Centre from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. and sing for literacy.

• Visit the Port Colborne Library for Family Literacy Day. Collect a free book bag and take advantage of free book giveaways on a first come, first served basis beginning at 9 a.m.

Jan. 31

The annual meeting of the Winger Church of Christ (Disciples) Hwy. 3 Winger will be held following the 10:30 a.m. morning service.

Feb. 5

A fundraising concert will be presented by the Lakeshore Catholic High School music depart-

ment featuring the British Invasion Band at 7 p.m. in the LCHS Auditorium. Tickets are \$10 and are available at the door or by contacting the school at 905-835-2451. Funds raised will go towards scholarships, bursaries and new instruments.

Feb. 7

The Chorale Camerata presents the gospel train revolution evolution – a concert celebrating Black History Month and a progression of gospel music over the last two centuries; 2:30 p.m. at St. John's United Church, 14788 Sodom Rd. Tickets are \$25 for adults, \$5 for students at the door or by calling 905-646-9225.

Feb. 11

The Roselawn Centre is holding its second annual Ladies Night Out. Join in on a night of fabulous friends, fantastic vendors and fine food and wine at 7:30 p.m. Tickets are \$25 and include appetizers, desserts and wine sampling. The

market place will include purses, jewellery, tarot card reading, mini massages, chocolate treats, specialty drinks and more. For more information or to purchase tickets call 905-834-0833.

Ongoing

• The 79 Lynton Davies Air Cadet Squadron meets every Tuesday at St. Peter's Lutheran Church, 200 Erie St., Port Colborne, from 6:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. Interested persons should contact captain John Derousie at 905-227-7609.

• Kids zone for children ages six to 12 runs every Monday and Friday from 6 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.; at the centre for Community Living, 100 McRae Ave. until June 18 for a \$5 registration fee. Free transportation available. Call 905-835-8941 ext. 135. All events are supervised by adults.

Library activities

• Adult Knitting classes with Vicki Fretz, begin-

ning Tuesday evenings 7 p.m. to 9 p.m., classes began Jan. 5 and continue to Mar. 9; and Thursday afternoons from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m., classes began Jan. 7 and continue to Mar. 11 in the library auditorium. To join the knitters club call Vicki 905-835-5373.

• Tai Chi Can: Improve your health, well-being, balance and breathing. Mondays 6:30 p.m. to 8 p.m. in the auditorium. Call 905-321-9536.

• Express Yourself: Writer's Support Group with facilitators Gary and Kitty Roy, Thursdays 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. Practical advice on getting published, finding a literary agent, and copyrights. For information contact the facilitators by e-mail at gray10@coqee.ca, or call the library at 905-834-6512.

• Films for seniors presented the first Wednesday of the month until May 1:30 p.m. in the auditorium. Free admission and refreshments.

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■ HEALTH AND WELLNESS CENTRE

New facility could save city money

KAESHA FORAND
InPort News Staff

PORT COLBORNE — The city's health and wellness centre has been the ability to open without draining the city's bank accounts, says John Alexander.

The vice-president administration for SCDM Sports Centre Design and Management Corp. says the city could actually save more than \$200,000 a year, compared to current operating costs for its three facilities.

During a health and wellness centre update held recently at city hall, Alexander said the city could increase its revenue to about \$723,000 once the new facility is built. However, that would also result in an increase in the cost of ice time and aggressive programming to ensure the new facility's two arenas and pool are constantly in use.

"I looked at revenue projections and at actual facilities. The rates people are paying in Port Colborne are unbelievably cheap," he said, noting that SCDM's revenue estimate includes a minimum hourly ice rate of \$175.

He said Port Colborne's subsidized school ice rate per hour is about \$80, while other areas charge \$150. Although he compared rates with similar facilities around the GTA, he acknowledged a city such as Port Colborne couldn't charge high rates like those in more populated cities.

The city's arenas and pool run an annual deficit of about \$700,000 and although operating costs for the new facility would hover around \$1.2 million annually, increased revenue would help offset those costs.

City CAO Bob Hill liked the thought of extra money that could be invested in capital projects.

"The cost to build is not the issue, it's the cost of contin-

ued operation," Hill said. "We're gearing up for at least two arenas and a pool. It boils down to what will the facility cost to operate? When a multimillion dollar question gets answered then we can move forward."

Alexander said it would cost the city about \$535,000 to open the facility, after revenue, and including \$60,000 for SCDM to help implement and co-ordinate programming.

A membership to the facility's walking track, pool and arenas was estimated at \$20 a month.

By combining facilities, Alexander said about \$100,000 in salaries and benefits could be saved. He recommended the new facility employ a general manager, assistant general manager, a part-time accountant, two maintenance staff, an ice co-ordinator, a pool co-ordinator, a senior operator and a junior maintenance worker who could operate the Zambonis.

A receptionist in the front lobby would be an asset to provide information and guide visitors to the appropriate areas, he added.

With year-round ice time, league and tournament play would increase and marketing could begin in 2011 to ensure use in 2012. Alexander said similar facilities can accommodate 60- to 125-team leagues, March break, Christmas and day camps for school PA days.

The boce club will vacate its current clubhouse and occupy the new Thomas Laanjan Sports Complex by the end of this July for the construction of the new facility. To date, the club is the only group willing to be incorporated into the centre.

Pool manager Marry Chlason said there are a number of programs and groups that would utilize two new pools.

With the new facility, she could teach first aid and life-guard programs, a masters swim program would draw older competitive swimmers and competitive swimmers could practice in the lap pool.

City treasurer Peter Senese said he is looking at the "big picture" and how to help capital projects. "The city has also put out a request for proposals for a company to help create a fundraising brick campaign, through which families or businesses who donate money can have a loved one's name engraved on a brick to be displayed."

Lee Camm, senior project manager with MHPM Project Leaders, said his company is holding to the city's schedule as long as council decides on the facility's build option as soon as possible.

A wellness centre committee meeting will be held the first week of February with the hopes of bringing the final report — with a concept, cost estimate and net operating budget — to council during a special meeting the second week of February.

Camm said green technology will be finalized during a LEED workshop after consultation. Although members of the public are calling for the implementation of green initiatives, it could take decades to recoup those costs.

A rainwater harvesting system was discussed. A cistern could hold rainwater to be used for flushing toilets and urinals, however, he said with Canada's low water prices, it would take decades to recoup the cost of the system.

Monthly updates on the project, timelines and plans are available at www.portcolborne.ca/page/Health_and_Wellness_Centre.

kforand@welllandtribune.ca

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PEOPLE, PLACES

Nobody wants a strike



George Duma
BY GEORGE

I'm blessed to be able to do what I do for a living. As a guy who teaches journalism at Niagara College, I cherish every day I work. I have always maintained — in fact, it's something I preach to my students — that if you find that one thing that is your passion and find a way to make a living at it, you'll never work a day in your life.

I've been lucky enough to find it twice. In all my years of journalism, the only fear was the folks who employed me would someday realize I would actually do it for free. I rarely felt like I was working. I got to go onto *The Tribune* building every day and built a paper for the next day. It was a challenge and it was just so much fun. When I made the decision to leave *The Trib* and go to Niagara College, I worried a bit about missing what I was leaving behind.

I needn't have. Life at Niagara has been everything I hoped it would be and more. I think about it constantly, to keep perspective, to focus on what I'm doing and to never forget how lucky I am. I get up every day and drive to Welland to spend time and share knowledge with enthusiastic young people.

Last week, a vote was held across the province by the Ontario Public Service Employees Union asking college teachers for a mandate to strike. The mandate was given, by a vote of 57% in favour of a strike versus 43% against. Normally, in votes such as this, a strong mandate is considered to be 65-70% or more. So to say OPSEU was given a strong mandate to strike would be a mistake. However, majority rules so here we now sit, with the possibility of a province-wide strike set for early February. Both sides were due to hit the bargaining table this past Tuesday for the first time in more than a month. There is the possibility that as you read this, a deal has been hammered out. I certainly hope so.

The money issue is this: The colleges have offered a four-year deal with annual salary increases of 1.75%, 1.75% and 2%. OPSEU countered with a three-year deal with annual increases of 2.5% in each of the three years.

During the past 45 years, since the college system was founded in Ontario, full-time academic staff has only gone out on strike three times. In 1984, instructors were legislated back to work after 23 days in an order that included binding arbitration. In 1989, both parties agreed to binding arbitration/mediation after 20 days. In 2006, it lasted 18 days when both parties agreed to binding mediation.

I believe it's fair to say nobody wants a strike. A deal simply means to reach it, it's more than that, though.

The ones who least desire a strike are the ones who will suffer the most if there is one — the students. There is an anxiety hanging over them since the vote results were made public Wednesday night. And who can blame them? The negotiations are endless. If there is a work disruption, obviously they miss out on their education. But it's more than that. If there is a strike of any length, the assumption is that the time lost would be tacked on to end of the school year so students would have to stay in classes into May. This, of course, would cut into their summer employment time, which means in order to pay tuition. It would be a mess.

I have very confidence both sides can sit down and come to an agreement. They simply must. There's just too much riding on it.

George Duma is a resident of Port Colborne and has spent 30 years in the newspaper business. He is currently a member of the Journalism Faculty at Niagara College. He welcomes comments and column suggestions and can be reached at gduma@concego.ca.